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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISHU

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5999

INFO RUTABA/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 6284

RUQMDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI 426

RUQMKM/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 1087

RUEHLD/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1373

RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 2589

RUFHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1586

RUSNAAA/USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

RUHQHGA/CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISHU 4951

E.O. 12065: GDS 9/2/87 (PETTERSON, DONALD K.) OR-M

TAGS: PINT, SO

SUBJ: SOMALI LEADERS CRITICIZE PRESIDENT SIAD

REF: MOGADISHU 4890

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. IN A CONVERSATION WITH ME SEPT. 1, PRESIDENT SIAD ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE HAD BEEN CRITICIZED DURING AN AUGUST 16 MEETING OF THE SUPREME REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL AND A SUBSEQUENT MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE SRC, CENTRAL COMMITTEE, COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENTS (REFTEL). HOWEVER, HE INDICATED HE DID NOT REGARD IT AS HIGHLY SERIOUS. IN FACT, HE SAID, SOMALIS LIKED TO ENGAGE IN POLEMICS, AND THE DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE WERE A HEALTHY PROCESS. HE SAID MUCH OF THE UNHAPPINESS ABOUT THE DEPLORABLE STATE OF THE ECONOMY CAN BE

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State Dept. review completed

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BLAMED ON THE POOR PERFORMANCE OF SOME OF THE MINISTERIES. IN PARTICULAR, HE CITED MINISTER OF FINANCE ABDULLAH ADDU AND MINISTER OF COMMERCE AHMED MOHAMED MOHAMUD AS HAVING FAILED TO EXPLAIN PROPERLY TO THE PUBLIC AND TO IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVELY DEVALUATION AND OTHER ECONOMIC MEASURES.

3. I SAID IT WAS INTERESTING THAT AFTER VOICING CRITICISM, HIS COLLEAGUES HAD LEFT IT UP TO HIM TO PROPOSE REMEDIAL ACTION. HE SAID HE WOULD MAKE A PROPOSAL IN DUE COURSE, BUT ADDED THAT HE COULD NOT DICTATE TO THE SRC, COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, THE PARTY OR THE PARLIAMENT. HIS RECOMMENDATION WOULD HAVE TO BE RATIFIED BY THOSE BODIES. HE DID NOT DISAGREE WHEN I SAID THAT THEY, NEVERTHELESS, WERE LOOKING TO HIM FOR GUIDANCE AND DECISIONS, BUT HE BALKED WHEN I SUGGESTED THAT THEY WOULD DO WHAT HE TOLD THEM TO DO. HE INSISTED THAT SOMALI TRADITION DOES NOT PERMIT A DICTATORSHIP AND THAT HE MUST ENGAGE IN A CONSULTATIVE PROCESS WITH LEADING FIGURES OF THE COUNTRY.

4. COMMENT: HE GAVE EVERY APPEARANCE OF TAKING THE OUTCOME OF THE TWO MEETINGS IN STRIKE. HE DID NOT SEEM DISCOURAGED OR ALARMED, AND DID NOT APPEAR WORN OUT, AS SOME REPORTS HAVE INDICATED. THE SONG AND DANCE HE GAVE ME ABOUT HAVING TO GET AGREEMENT TO HIS PROPOSALS IS A MISREPRESENTATION OF HIS OWN POWER, BUT NOT A TOTAL SHAM, FOR INDEED HE CANNOT JUST JAM HIS DECISIONS DOWN THE THROATS OF HIS COLLEAGUES. THEY REPRESENT INTERESTS, TRIBAL IF NOTHING ELSE, WHOSE SUPPORT HE NEEDS. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT IN THE DAYS AHEAD (AND IT COULD BE SEVERAL WEEKS UNTIL HE ANNOUNCES HIS INTENTIONS), HE WILL SOUND OUT A BROAD SPECTRUM OF PEOPLE THEN CAJOLE, BARGAIN AND BRIBE AS NECESSARY TO GET HIS WAY. ALTHOUGH IT IS UNCERTAIN WHETHER THIS TIME HE CAN GET AWAY WITH MORE POLITICAL SLEIGHT-OF-HAND, AT THIS POINT IT WOULD SEEM HE WILL.

PETTERSON

END OF MESSAGE

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